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REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 6-10, 12-16 and 18-24 are pending in this application. In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-4, 6-10, 12-16, 18-21 and 23 under 34 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,960,337 (Brewster, et al.) in view of U.S. Patent 6,028,514 (Lemelson, et al.) and further in view of U.S. Patent 6,050,122 (Sutcliffe, et al.). Also, Claims 22-24 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite, and Claim 24 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as not complying with the written description requirement. Claims 22 and 24 were not rejected over the prior art.

The rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103 and the rejection of Claim 24 under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, are respectfully traversed. Claims 22-24 are being amended to address the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. Also, independent Claims 1, 7 and 13 re being re-phrased to emphasize differences between the claims and the prior art.

In rejecting Claims 22-24 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite, the Examiner noted that Claim 22 recites several limitations for which there is insufficient antecedent bases in the claim.

In Applicants' previous Amendment, some material was inadvertently not added to Claim 22, and this opportunity is being taken to add this material to the claim. This added material provides the antecedent basis for the steps of establishing the first and second databases, and the step of using the matching server. In addition, Claim 24 is being amended to change the phrase "the person making the request" to "the person who transmits the request," in order to better match the specific language used earlier in the claim.

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Further, Claim 23 is being amended to change "the person making the request" to "the person who transmits the request," and to change "the step of notifying" to "the step of using the matching sever to notify." Claim 1, subparagraphs (d) and (f) provide the appropriate antecedent basis for these terms in Claim 23.

Claim 24 is also being amended to more closely conform to the language of Claim 1. In particular, the preamble of Claim 24 is being changed to read "wherein the step of using the matching server to obtain information." Subparagraph (f) of Claim 1 provides the appropriate antecedent basis for this phrase in Claim 24.

Applicants' Attorneys have carefully reviewed Claims 22-24, and the limitations of these claims have the appropriate antecedent basis. The Examiner is thus asked to reconsider and to withdraw the rejection of Claims 22-24 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

The rejection of Claim 24 under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, is respectfully traversed. In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to Claim 24 on the basis that the claim describes a dialogue between the volunteer and the person in need prior to the volunteers being selected. As described in Claim 24, the dialogue is established between the person in need and the candidate volunteers. Then, one of those candidate volunteers is selected to help the person in need.

This feature is discussed in the specification on page 10, line 18 to page 11, line 11. There, it is explained that a list of candidate volunteers may be made, a dialogue may be established between these candidate volunteers and the person with the disability, and then the best candidate is picked. This portion of the specification fully enables those of ordinary skill in the art to practice the above-discussed feature of Claim 24. In particular, it is accurate to say that the candidate volunteers are selected before the selection of the one of the volunteers to help the person in need.

In light of the above-comments, the Examiner is also asked to reconsider and to withdraw the rejection of Claim 24 under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph.

Neither Claim 22 nor Claim 24 was rejected over the prior art, and it is thus believed that these claims are now allowable without further argument or discussion.

In addition to the foregoing, all of Claims 1-4, 6-10, 12-16 and 18-24 patentably distinguish over the prior art and are allowable because the prior art does not disclose or suggest the use of the specific databases described in independent Claims 1, 7 and 11 for the purpose of matching volunteers with people who need assistance, as described in those Claims 1, 7 and 10.

To elaborate, the instant invention provides a procedure to help people with disabilities; and in accordance with the invention, a network is formed that puts volunteers in contact with the people who have requested help. The network includes a first database to hold information about people with disabilities, and a second database to hold information about the volunteer helpers.

More specifically, for each disabled person participating in the network, the first database provides a description of the needs of the person, his or her type of handicap, a history of prior assistance given to the person, and a list of volunteers who have helped that person in the past. The second database identifies, for each of the volunteers, the name of the volunteer, his or her skills, services that the volunteer can offer, a history of help given by the volunteer, and a list of people that he or she has helped.

When a person with a disability wants help, that person makes a request for assistance. A matching server then gets information from the first database about the person asking for help, and uses that information to identify a volunteer from the second database. This matching server then notifies that volunteer and gives him or her the information needed to contact and help the

person who asked for the help.

The prior art of record does not disclose or suggest the above-described data bases used for matching people with disabilities with volunteer helpers. These databases are described in independent Claims 1, 7 and 11.

More specifically, Brewster, et al. describes a procedure in which, after an operator is informed of an emergency event, the operator selects from a group of Emergency Assistance Services (EAS), the EAS who can reach the location of the emergency in the quickest time, and the operator then notifies that selected EAS.

Lemelson, et al. discloses a procedure in which people may be warned of a variety of emergency or dangerous conditions. In this procedure, a person carries a warning device, which can also be used to monitor for several medical conditions of the wearer.

Sutcliffe, et al. discloses an Internet based matchmaking procedure. Based on input criteria, a computer matches two candidates.

In the Office Action, the Examiner noted that Brewster, et al, Lemelson, et al. and Sutcliffe, et al. all fail to disclose the databases of the present invention, but the Examiner argued that these differences are only found in the nonfunctional descriptive data and will not distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art in terms of patentability.

Applicants respectfully disagree.

All of the limitations of a claim are part of the claim and are part of the subject matter defined by the claim. Thus, when determining whether the subject matter of a claim would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, all of the features described in the claim are part of that subject matter and need to be considered. Further, the databases described in the claims 1, 7 and 11 are not simply intended results or theoretical advantages of the invention, but instead

are a tangible and real part of the invention.

In order to better emphasize that the specific data in the database described in the claims 1, 7 and 11 are used in the matching process, Claims 1, 7 and 11 are being amended to describe these data before the description of using those databases to match a volunteer with a person requesting help. In this way, a reader more easily understands that the matching process is made using the specific data in the databases.

These databases, and the data in the databases, are very useful because they help to ensure that effective assistance is provided. For example, the mere fact that a person has volunteered to help does not mean that person can effectively help anyone. The databases of the present invention better enable the matching server to match the abilities, skills and experiences of the volunteers with people who can use those abilities, skills or experiences

As indicated above, independent Claims 1, 7 and 13 describe these databases of the present invention, which are not shown in or suggested by the prior art. Specifically, each of Claims 1, 7 and 13 describe the feature that the matching server provides information to at least one of (i) said one of the volunteers, or (ii) the person making the request, to enable said one of the volunteers and the person making the request to physically find and meet each other.

Because of the above-discussed differences between Claims 1, 7 and 13 and the prior art, and because of the advantages associated with those differences, these Claims patentably distinguish over the prior art and are allowable. Claims 2-4, 6 and 19-21, 23 and 24 are dependent from, and are allowable with, Claim 1. Likewise, Claims 8, 10 and 12 are dependent from Claim 7 and are allowable therewith; and Claims 14-16 and 18 are dependent from, and are allowable with, Claim 13.

In view of the above discussion, the Examiner is asked to reconsider and to withdraw the

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rejection of Claims 1-4, 6-8, 10, 12-16 and 18-21 and 23 under 35 U.S.C. 103, and the rejections of Claims 22-24 under 35 U.S.C. 112, and to allow Claims 1-4, 6-8, 10, 12-16 and 18-24. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference with Applicants' Attorneys would be advantageous to the disposition of this case, the Examiner is asked to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully Submitted,

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